

Message Text

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15

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-20 IGA-01 OPR-02 A-01 SY-05

CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SSO-00 NSCE-00 SCS-03

SCA-01 OMB-01 /101 W

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P R 180725Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3901

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL UDORN

DIA

CINCPAC

CDR USSAG NKP

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 3477

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, LA

SUBJ: SITUATION IN SAVANNAKHET

REF: VIENTIANE 3470

1. ACTING USAID DIRECTOR RAMSEY AT 10:45 TODAY SPOKE BY RADIO PHONE TO AREA COORDINATOR STONE IN SAVANNAKHET. STONE REPORTED THAT THERE WAS NO ONE IN HIS WHOLE COMMUNITY WHO IS WORRIED. THEY ARE WILLING TO WAIT OUT THE NEGOTIATIONS OF THE PGNU REPRESENTATIVES WITH THE DEMONSTRATORS.

2. STONE SAID HE HAS LISTENED TO CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN THE DEMONSTRATORS AND THEIR COLLEAGUES AS WELL AS PGNU OFFICIALS HERE IN VIENTIANE. HE SAID THE EARLIER JCCIA TEAM IS NOW DOING SOME NEGOTIATING WITH THE DEMONSTRATORS. HE ALSO SAID THAT SOME OF THE LAO GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
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WHO HAD BEEN SINGLED OUT FOR CALUMNY BY THE DEMONSTRATORS

AND HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN IN HIDING WERE SHOWING UP AROUND TOWN.

3. WHEN RAMSEY ASKED STONE IF HE COULD NEGOTIATE WITH DEMONSTRATORS TO ALLOW AN AIRPLANE TO LAND IN SAVANNAKHET AND BRING THE AMERICANS TO VIENTIANE FOR A LITTLE VACATION, HE SAID HE DID NOT BELIEVE HE COULD MAKE SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT RIGHT NOW.

4. STONE NOW HAS PERMISSION FROM THE DEMONSTRATORS TO USE HIS USAID COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM TO TALK TO VIENTIANE.

5. ONE INTERESTING VIGNETTE IN THIS STORY IS THAT WHEN THE DEMONSTRATORS HEARD THE ANNOUNCEMENT THAT A MR. STONE WAS COMING TO LAOS TO BE THE NEW AMBASSADOR, THEY SENT A VERY HIGH-LEVEL DELEGATION TO INTERVIEW AREA COORDINATOR STONE AND DETERMINE WHETHER HE WAS THE AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE TO LAOS.

6. TO SUMMARIZE, ALL AMERICANS AND OTHER ASSOCIATED FOREIGNERS IN SAVANNAKHET ARE SAFE, ARE NOT THREATENED AND APPEAR TO BE LESS RESTRICTED IN THEIR MOVEMENTS.

7. ON LEARNING MID-AFTERNOON MAY 17 THAT FLIGHT OF MINISTERS' PLANE TO SAVANNAKHET HAD BEEN CANCELLED, I TRIED FRUITLESSLY TO REACH BOTH MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS PHOUMI AND MINISTER OF INTERIOR PHENG PHONGSAVAN THE REST OF THE AFTERNOON. I FINALLY SPOKE TO PHOUMI LAST EVENING. HE SAID THAT HE HAD ASKED DEUANE TO SEE PHENG AND GO TO SAVANNAKHET. HOWEVER, DEUANE HAD INDICATED THAT THE SITUATION THERE WAS NOT CLEAR AND THE SECURITY WAS UNCERTAIN. THEY ARE, THEREFORE, WAITING FOR A REPORT FROM COLONEL SOMBOUN OF THE JCCIA NEGOTIATING TEAM INCLUDING A STATEMENT OF WHAT THE DEMONSTRATORS

WANT. PHOUMI UNDERSTOOD THAT THE AMERICANS THERE WERE SAFE AND THAT GENERAL NOUPHET HAD RESPONSIBILITY FOR MAINTAINING SECURITY. I REPEATED WHAT I HAD SAID EARLIER THAT WE WERE PREPARED TO WITHDRAW ALL AMERICANS FROM SAVANNAKHET AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, AND THAT WE WERE CONFIDENTIAL

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VERY MUCH CONCERNED FOR THEIR SAFETY AND THEREFORE HOPED THAT THE MINISTERS COULD GO THERE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. HE MERELY ANSWERED THAT HE WOULD TALK TO DEUANE AGAIN.

8. THIS MORNING, MAY 18, PHENG IS IN CONFERENCE PRESUMABLY DISCUSSING THIS MATTER.
CHAPMAN

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NNN

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